

Little Fables of Society

Grace
Hontense
Tower

(A timid young author
with a good appetite—
E.)

THE FABLE OF THE ABSENT-MINDED MAN.

HE was gotten up regardless of time and expense.

pression. He did. But that came later.

From the crown of his top-hat to the tip of his patent leathers he was irreproachably gowned. His coat was of the latest New York mode; his vest was a study in aesthetics; his tie was a symphony.

As he entered the lift of the Young Hotel he was accosted by the Man from Chicago with "Come on, old man, and have a game of pool."

"Thanks, awfully, old chap. I'd like to, don't you know, but I have an engagement. Some other time," replied the Well-Groomed Man, as he lit his cigar.

"Oh, beg pardon; queening, as usual, I see," retorted the Man from Chicago, with an indulgent smile as of one looking down from heights superior upon a pilgrim far below. The Man from Chicago had been crossed in love. The Well-Groomed Man was very young, and there were several classes ahead of him. So he turned his face toward Beretania street. He was going to call on the Popular Girl.

When he arrived at the Enchanted Castle where the excuse for all his grandeur resided he was shown in by the little almond-eyed Celestial who did duty for maid of all work.

"Miss Lico, she up stairs; I see if she at home," said the little servant as he took the Well-Groomed Man's card. (Rice wasn't her name though.)

When Miss Rice had received her visitor's card she had merely glanced at it and then at the mirror, given a pat or two to her brown hair and come down to the drawing-room.

The next afternoon two girl friends of the Popular Girl came over in their electric for a cup of tea and a bit of gossip in the lanai, but finding she was dressing they ran up to her room for a cosy chat, toying with the silver trifles on the dressing-table as they talked. The girl in the Alice-blue toques spied the bit of pasteboard lying innocently on the dressing-table and picked it up to see who her friend's most recent caller had been—just as the Popular Girl had intended she should do all the time. Suddenly she felt into a heap among the pale-blue cushions of the couch, where she went off into peals of laughter.

"Why, Bess, what's the matter?" exclaimed the brunette in the pink linen. A moment later she, too, was seized with a paroxysm of mirth.

"Why, girls, what is the matter?" exclaimed their hostess, in surprise. "What are you laughing at?"

"Oh, Alleen!" (Her name isn't Alleen, either.) "How long since you have taken in washing? How much do you charge a dozen and do you prefer flannel or linen?" teased the girl with the blonde braids, provokingly, as she handed her hostess her late caller's visiting card.

"No; the other side," prompted the girl in the pink linen and as the mystified hostess glanced at the reverse side of the bit of pasteboard her puzzled expression gave place to one of utter incredulity and horror as she beheld her recent caller's laundry list.

It was plain, and unmistakably clear as to meaning, and nothing had been forgotten:

Handkerchiefs 7
Collars 10
Shirts 4
Socks 6 pair
Palamas 2

She got no further, but the story did, and if the Well-Groomed Man chances to read this paper he will know why the Popular Girl looked at him with that little aggravating twinkle in her brown eyes at the roof-garden dance the other night.

MORAL:—Never use your visiting card for a laundry list, lest, in a moment of abstraction you leave it upon a lady unawares.

THE FABLE OF THE MAN WHO WASN'T SURE.

I'M AFRAID you have made a mistake," said the tall young man from Los Angeles with slightly flushed countenance as he accosted the clerk of the Young Hotel a few moments after being shown to his room last Friday. "I think you have given me the wrong room. I'm not—that is—I, er, I haven't any wife—I guess you have put me in the bridal chamber. I'll just take an ordinary room, if you don't mind," concluded the youth with a relieved air, as he tried to look unconcerned.

"Bridal chamber?" repeated the clerk, looking mystified. "I don't think I quite understand. Just wait a minute. I'll look in on you."

"You are in empty-two, are you not? Yes; I thought so. That isn't the bridal chamber. It is on the floor above."

"But the white-lace curtains?" murmured the youth, meekly. "I thought—"

"Mosquitoes!" tersely explained the

clerk, as he coughed sympathetically.

"It's your treat, old man."

And they had something together in the roof garden.

MORAL:—All is not bridal that's lace.

THE FABLE OF THE TACTLESS WOMAN.

THE hour was 5 o'clock and the place was the lanai of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, where a congenial group of women of the Editorial party were enjoying a cosy chat over a cup of tea.

"Talk about the 'simple life'! Why, mine is getting more strenuous every day. I can't bear to miss a thing, and all these delightful trips and dances and drives and things are making me forget all of my good resolutions. Why, my nerves are reduced to the condition of shredded cocoanut already and the trip isn't half over yet," exclaimed the woman in white linen as she helped herself to her seventh macaroon. Though some years past thirty, with her black hair and Irish eyes, her smooth complexion and girlish form, she doesn't look a day over twenty-five.

"Actually, my dear," she said to the vivacious blonde in blue, "I'm completely fagged out. I feel a hundred!" when up spake the Tactless One, the little woman who always means well but never knows quite how to express what she means:

"A hundred! Why, my dear, you don't look half that!"

And she never knew why the woman in white linen stiffened and declined a third cup of tea.

MORAL:—It is usually safest to change the subject when even the remotest mention is made of a woman's age, even if she herself refers to it. Treat calamities often may be thus averted.

THE FABLE OF THE HUSBAND WHO WORKED.

IT happened at a dinner of the Shirt Waist Club, a well known dove club of merry maids and young maidens, who gather every two weeks about the card tables for their favorite game of five hundred. It is a rule of this popular club that whenever a member so far succumbs to Dan Cupid's wiles as to pledge her faith to "take the veil" at the altar hymeneal she is to be honored by the club with a matinee party and dinner on the last Saturday of her maidenhood, and very delightful are these little ante-nuptial affairs for the fair brides-to-be.

This particular dinner was being given by the Newest Bride, who was for the first time since her own marriage, a month before, offering the hospitality of her cosy home. Everything, from soft silken shades of the candles to the ribbons on the place-cards and the frock of the hostess, was carried out in crimson, love's own color. The table sparkled with new crystal and freshly engraved silver, the coming-out party of the wedding gifts, and the snowy napery was being christened for the first time. It was a dove dinner and the men were conspicuous by their absence.

The little hostess was not a rich man's wife and she did not keep a maid, but for this one time she had engaged a little colored nursemaid from her neighbor's across the street, to serve the dinner, so that she might be free to entertain her guests.

The dinner was perfect, and Chloe had not made a mistake. She passed things on the proper side; she was careful not to touch the table with the carafe as she refilled the glasses; she remembered to remove the olives before she brought in the dessert. From the crisp ruffles on her trig little apron to the saucy perkiness of her tiny cap she was absolutely correct.

She anticipated every want of the guests, as a good maid should, and it took but a glance from the hostess' blue eyes to convey a command. Really, Chloe was a wonder, thought every one of the guests, and each registered a vow to employ this particular maid the next time she entertained.

Coffee was being served in the drawing-room. As Chloe entered with the sugar tray her skirt caught awkwardly in the door. There was a smothered exclamation from Chloe. It wasn't a Sunday school word, either, and it wasn't smothered quickly enough. Sixteen spoons clattered in sixteen saucers, and sixteen pairs of bright eyes stared intently at the new maid. "Why, Harry!" gasped the girl in sea-foam crepe, "Who would ever have thought it!"

"Well, I beg your pardon for the word," said the Newest Bride's husband, ruefully, as he met the reproachful glance of his little wife from behind the coffee urn.

"I'm not used to wearing these exalted toga, you know, and I mean the pesky things get all tangled up in a fellow's feet. How you girls stand petticoats beats me," and the perspiring maid looked apologetic.

"Why, you see, girls," explained the

Newest Bride, sweetly, "at the very last minute the Burton twins had the colle, and Chloe had to disappoint me. There wasn't time to get another maid from the employment bureau, and just when I was in despair I thought of these things I wore in the 'Kleptomaniac' last winter, at the Shakespeare Club. You know I took the part of Kalle, the maid, and the things were new and fresh. So Harry, like a dear, said he'd black up and serve the dinner,"—and a wire-less message flashed from the bino to the brown eyes, as the Newest Bride looked for a moment up at her gallant young husband.

"You see I couldn't disappoint the little girl," said Harry, with a smile as he took off his apron, "and I thought it was a lark. Now I know why the matter made me wipe the dishes when I was a kid."

MORAL:—Mothers, train your sons with an eye to future emergencies. Daughters, when choosing a husband, always be careful to select one who has kitchen as well as parlor tricks.

THE FABLE OF THE DEBUTANTES WHO COUNTED.

Their Side.

IT was their first keep-on-your-hat-and-look-frigid kind of affair and they dreaded it. But Mrs. Exclusive's affairs were always so smart and they wanted to appear accustomed to that sort of thing.

"I just can't think of a thing to talk about," said the girl in cream lace as she fastened a long-stemmed American Beauty in her girdle, then stood back from the mirror to get the effect.

"I have a scheme," exclaimed the Resourceful One, as the light of sudden inspiration shone in her gray eyes. "We'll just count. Nobody will know the difference and it will be all right, and when we run out of things to say no one will ever guess. Our places are together, for Mrs. Exclusive told me so. I'll just turn to you and say, 'One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight' and you can say, 'Nine, ten, eleven, twelve.' We'll smile and change our expression and everyone will think we are talking. Come, let's go down," and the girl in champagne voile tucked a bunch of violets in her belt.

"There she is now—the guest of honor, Mrs. Blue Blood," as a haughty woman in a Paquin gown and a Virot hat sailed majestically across the reception room.

The two debutantes, feeling unutter-

able things, descended the staircase to the drawing-room.

The Other Side.

"What charming girls those two with the violets were," said Mrs. Blue Blood to her hostess some hours later, as she was saying her adieux. They seemed to be so clever and bright. I quite wished you had placed them nearer me, so I could have enjoyed them. It is so seldom nowadays, my dear, that one meets a girl who is a good dinner-out. Most of them are so insipid and stereotyped, and if you meet one who isn't she is the risqué style one is always afraid of. Really, your young friends never seemed to be at a loss for something clever to say, and they seemed to be quite adequate to each other. I should like to know them better. I must invite them to my next dinner."

MORAL:—If you don't know the answer, never mind; just nodden your lips and look pleasant, and the rest is easy.

"How do you account for all these earthquakes, professor?" inquired Farmer Hopp of his summer boarder.

"I hardly know how to account for them. I think there is something overweighing certain parts of the earth."

"By gum, I blive ye've hit it! It's the heavy crops!"—Atlanta Georgian.

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